

the Secretary who is responsible for the direction and management of the project.

(t) *Project period* means the period, as stated in the award document and modifications thereto, if any, during which Federal sponsorship begins and ends.

(u) *Secretary* means the Secretary of Agriculture and any other officer or employee of the Department of Agriculture to whom the authority involved may be delegated.

(v) *State* means any one of the fifty States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, the Virgin Islands of the United States, and the District of Columbia.

(w) *Teaching* means formal classroom instruction, laboratory instruction, and practicum experience in the food and agricultural sciences and matters related thereto (such as faculty development, student recruitment and services, curriculum development, instructional materials and equipment, and innovative teaching methodologies) conducted by colleges and universities offering baccalaureate or higher degrees.

(x) *Third party in-kind contributions* means non-cash contributions of property or services provided by non-Federal third parties, including real property, equipment, supplies and other expendable property, directly benefiting and specifically identifiable to a funded project or program.

(y) *United States* means the several States, the territories and possessions of the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, the Virgin Islands of the United States, and the District of Columbia.

§ 3405.3 Institutional eligibility.

Proposals may be submitted by land-grant and other U.S. colleges and universities offering a baccalaureate or first professional degree in at least one discipline or area of the food and agricultural sciences. Each applicant must have a demonstrable capacity for, and a significant ongoing commitment to, the teaching of food and agricultural sciences generally and to the specific

need and/or subject area(s) for which a grant is requested. Awards may be made only to eligible institutions as defined in § 3405.2(i).

Subpart B—Program Description

§ 3405.4 Purpose of the program.

The Department of Agriculture is designated as the lead Federal agency for higher education in the food and agricultural sciences. In this context, CSREES has specific responsibility to initiate and support projects to strengthen college and university teaching programs in the food and agricultural sciences. One national initiative for carrying out this responsibility is the competitive Higher Education Challenge Grants Program. A primary goal of the program is to attract and ensure a continual flow of outstanding students into food and agricultural sciences higher education programs and to provide them with an education of the highest quality available anywhere in the world and which reflects the unique needs of the Nation. It is designed to stimulate and enable colleges and universities to provide the quality of education necessary to produce baccalaureate or higher degree level graduates capable of strengthening the Nation's food and agricultural scientific and professional work force. It is intended that projects supported by the program will:

(a) Address a State, regional, national, or international educational need;

(b) Involve a creative or nontraditional approach toward addressing that need which can serve as a model to others;

(c) Encourage and facilitate better working relationships in the university science and education community, as well as between universities and the private sector, to enhance program quality and supplement available resources; and

(d) Result in benefits which will likely transcend the project duration and USDA support.

§ 3405.5 Matching funds.

Each application must provide for matching support from a non-Federal